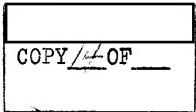


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OXCART Deployment Proposal

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NRO review(s) completed.

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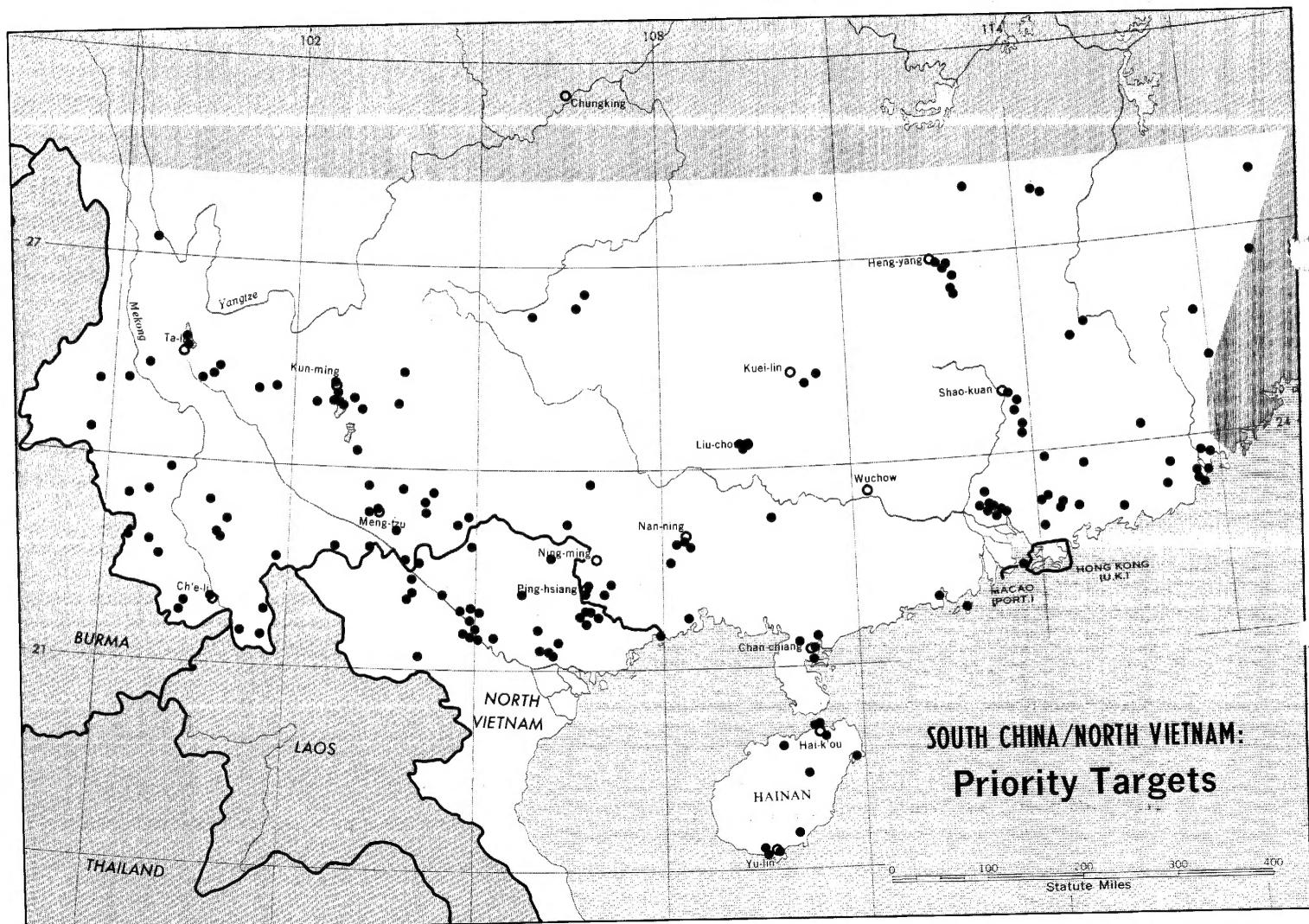
OXCART
Deployment Proposal

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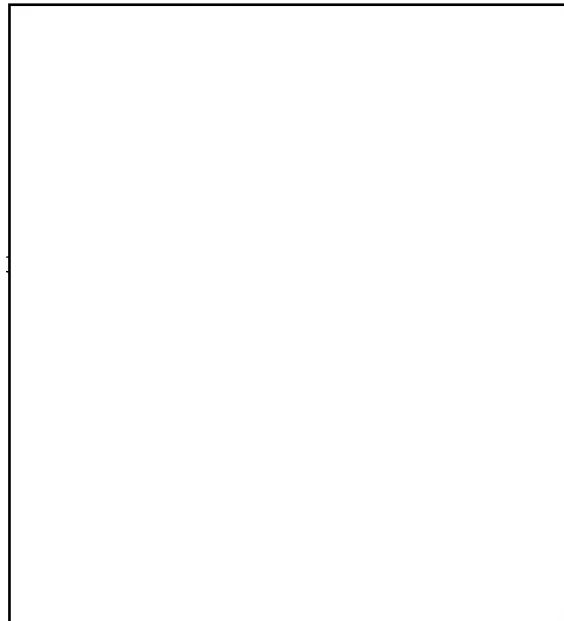
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I. There is a critical need for adequate intelligence to detect possible Chinese Communist strategic buildup in South China and North Vietnam which might lead to their direct involvement in the Vietnam war.

A. In order to obtain this intelligence we must acquire coverage on targets in South China and North Vietnam, chiefly ground force installations, major complexes and key lines of communication. In all, there are 166 targets, 137 in South China and 29 in North Vietnam on which we need a data base and thereafter selective periodic surveillance coverage. (The highest priority area for coverage is shaded in red on the accompanying maps.)

II. What resources are we now committing to this collection effort?



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III. Our present photographic reconnaissance effort is good, but not as good as it could be.

A. As you know, baseline coverage lies at the heart of all photographic intelligence. By photographing all key areas within a given time frame, we can establish a point of departure for spotting possibly significant changes at a future time in the same areas. To date our baseline coverage is by no means complete for South China. What we do have is spotty in terms of detail and resolution. For example we may know that a particular military base is operational, but we may not be able to discern what equipment is parked around the area.

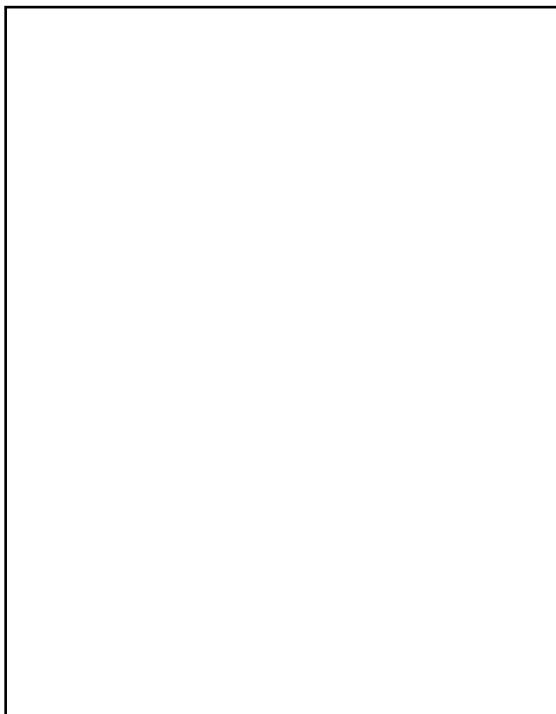
1. Because the Chinese are increasingly resorting to diversionary tactics such as camouflage, dispersal, and the use of dummies, the degree of detail in our base line and surveillance photography is now more important than ever.

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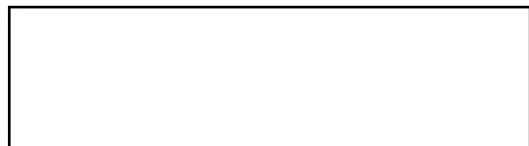
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2. The U-2 aircraft system, operated by SAC under the program code name TROJAN HORSE, is used primarily over North Vietnam and is not authorized to operate over China proper, although it occasionally obtains some oblique coverage of South China from across the border.

3. The BLUE SPRINGS program is carried out by drone photographic aircraft, operating over portions of South China but primarily over North Vietnam.



IV. Despite their excellence, all of these systems are limited.

A. The tactical jets and the drones are vulnerable in varying degrees not only to enemy fighters but also to both conventional AAA and to SAMs.

B. The U-2s can be downed by SAMs and, under some circumstances, by MIG-21s.

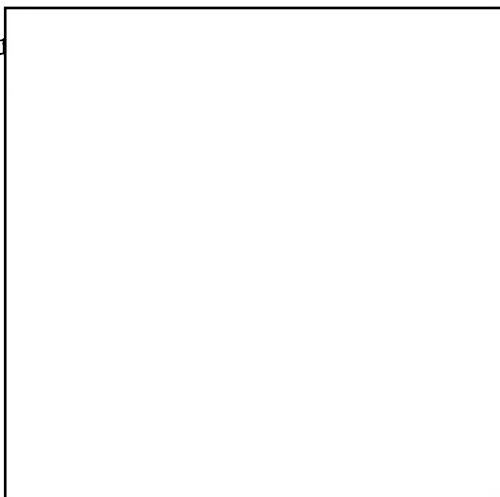
C. While the satellites are not vulnerable to enemy attack, their success depends largely on weather. They cannot seek out breaks in cloud cover; our capability to adjust their flight paths is limited.

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D. Let me summarize our experience with the four basic programs from October 1, 1965 to April 23, 1966.

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2. From this experience I conclude that the reconnaissance tasks which we need to accomplish in South China and North Vietnam are unlikely to be achieved successfully if we must continue to rely solely on the assets which we are currently using.

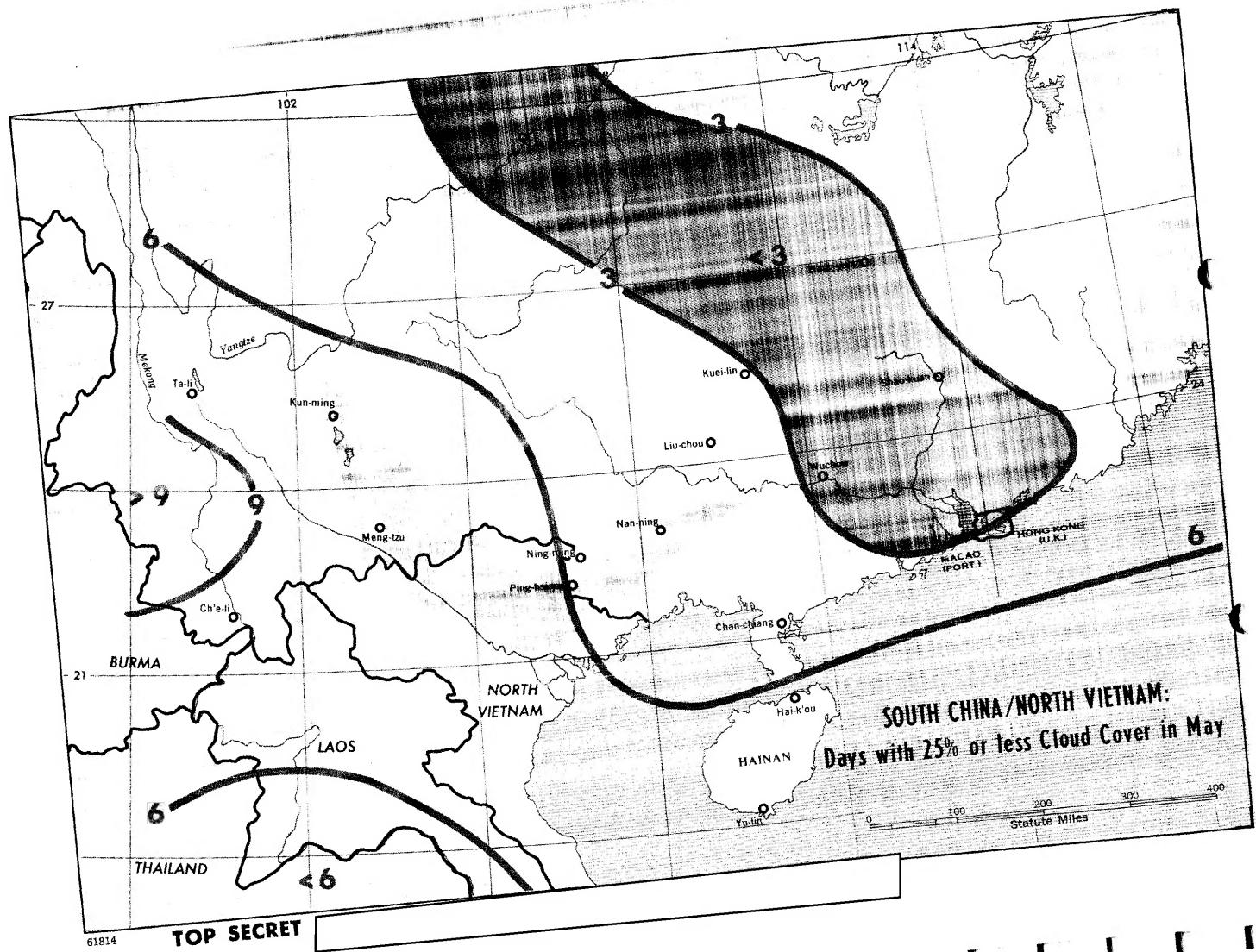
V. Adding the OXCART to the existing combination of systems would give us undeniable advantages.

- A. The OXCART, like the satellites, is virtually invulnerable to fighters and surface-to-air missiles. It can cover high-priority targets now denied to U-2s and tactical photo reconnaissance aircraft.
- B. Unlike the satellites, OXCART can program coverage when there are sudden openings during periods of sustained bad weather—and weather is a prime consideration in South China and North Vietnam.
- C. It is bad now, and will be particularly bad from June through September.

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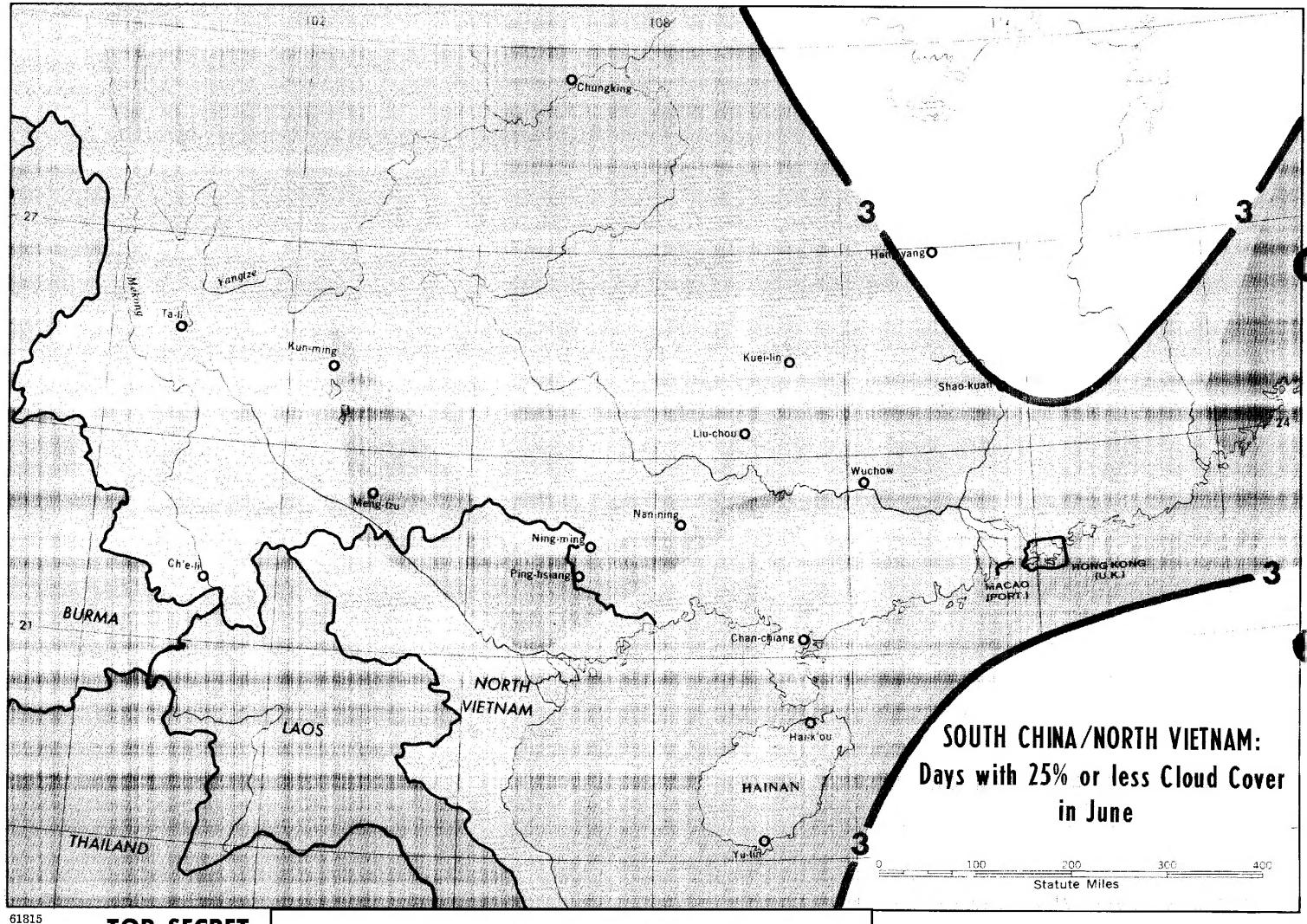
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D. This map shows the number of days in May when the weatherman predicts days with 25 percent or less cloud cover, in various areas of China and Vietnam. The grey tone shows the area where there will be three days or less in the course of the month.

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In June, with the onset of the monsoon, the entire area promises
less than three days of weather suitable for photography.

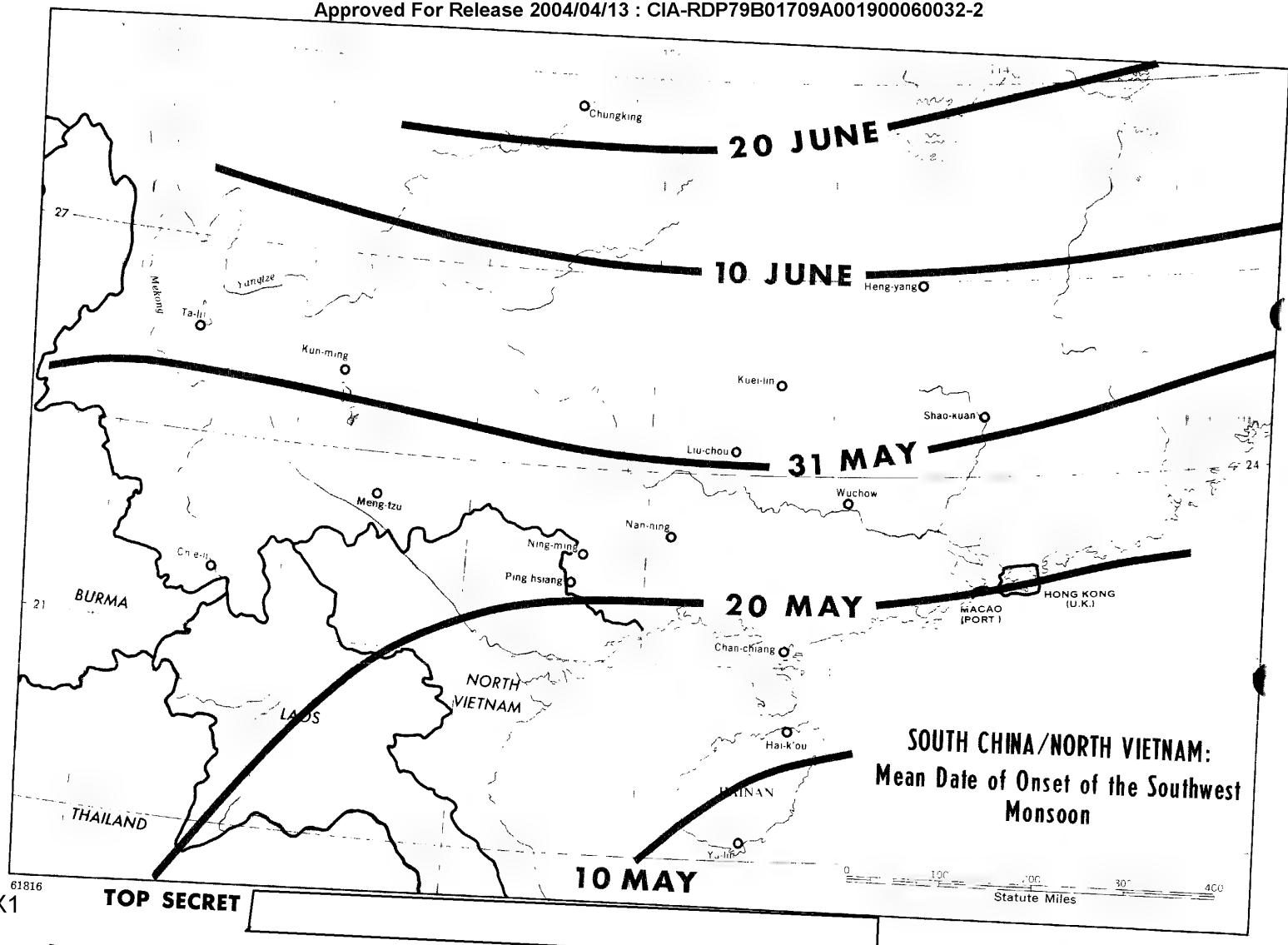
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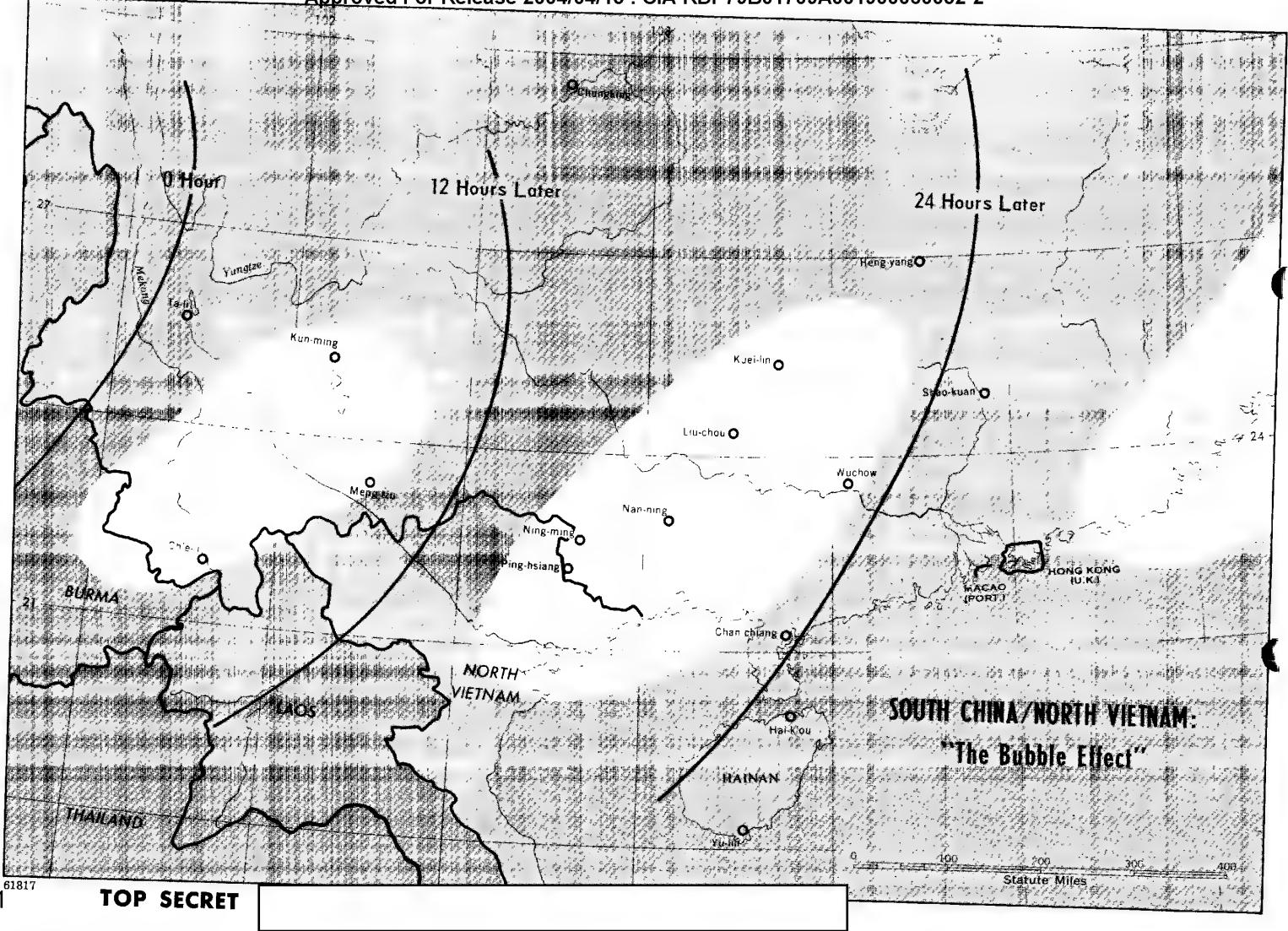
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E. This map shows the approximate time when the oncoming southwest monsoon can be expected to preclude most possibilities of photography over the various areas. From June through September, there will be a little good reconnaissance weather in the area.

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F. There may be one or two days a month, however, when a large hole or "bubble" will open in the overcast and permit photography. These "bubbles" are relatively predictable to the weathermen, and this picture shows a hypothetical bubble, at 12-hour intervals, as it is blown across China from west to east.

1. In past years we have been able to anticipate these peepholes and exploit them with a U-2. The reconnaissance satellites, with their predetermined orbits, cannot be programmed to take advantage of these bubbles. A manned aircraft is the only vehicle that can use these openings to gather some data-base data and changes from the base-on the Chinese military posture.

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VI. In short, we are facing a period of over four months when our potential enemy will have an important ally on his side—the weather. This weather screen will retard our collection of knowledge on his homeland. There may be enough good weather days, however, to let us cover most of the targets we need for our photographic base if we augment present assets with a reliable quick-reaction capability that can exploit limited weather openings.

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OXCART AIRCRAFT

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Speed ----- Mach 3.1 1860 Knots

Altitude ----- 84,000 Ft. Plus



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VII. The quick reaction reconnaissance asset that could do much to help us is the OXCART, shown in this photograph.

A. This is an aircraft that can fly over denied areas at more than three times the speed of sound, and at altitudes in excess of 84,000 feet.

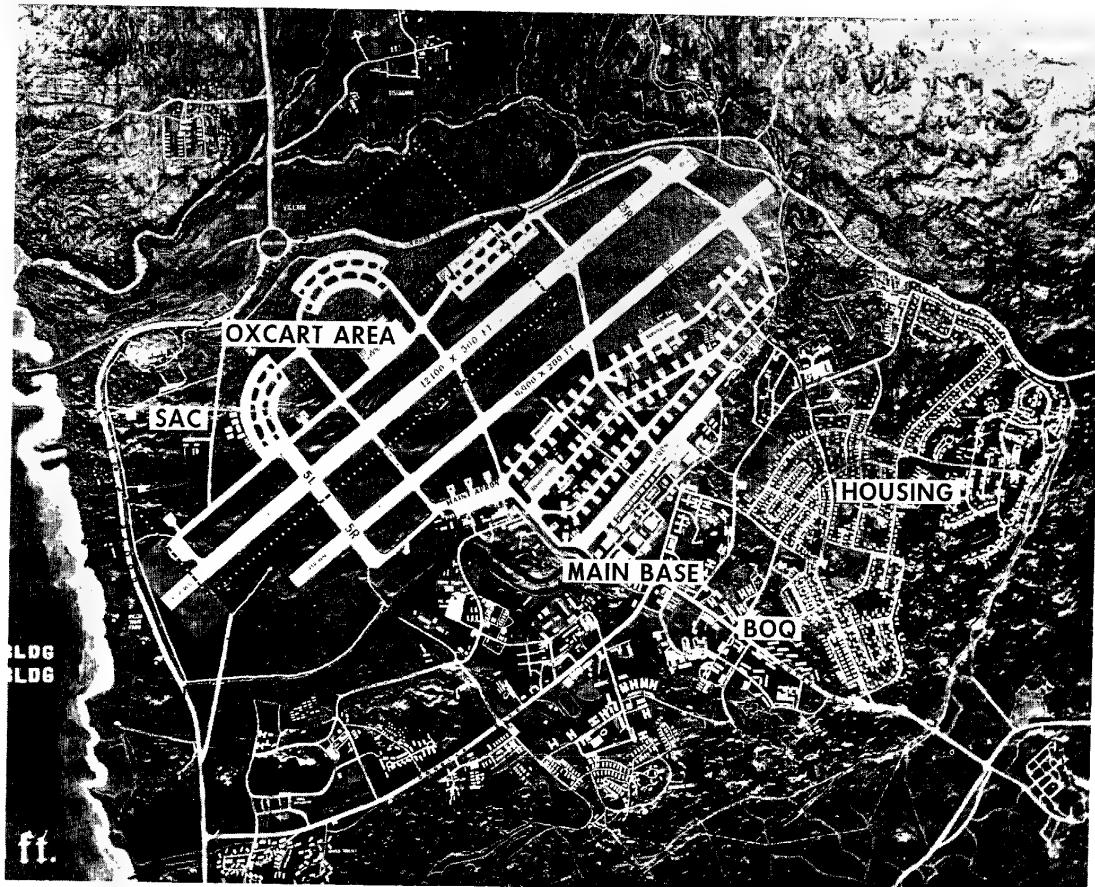
1. It has demonstrated that it can provide high-resolution photography of a swath 50 miles wide.

B. There are three of these aircraft ready to go, manned by qualified civilian pilots, under CIA control.

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DETACHMENT FACILITIES INCLUDE

- 2 HANGARS
- EQUIPMENT & CAMERA LAB BLDG.
- OPERATIONS COMPLEX
- COMMUNICATIONS COMPLEX

- HOUSING MESSING FACILITIES
- FUEL STORAGE FACILITIES
- ALL FACILITIES ARE OPERATIONALLY READY

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- C. We have pre-positioned [redacted] pounds of equipment at Kadena.
- D. The operational, housing and messing facilities are ready. Shop equipment, spare parts, motor vehicles, and POL supplies are in place.

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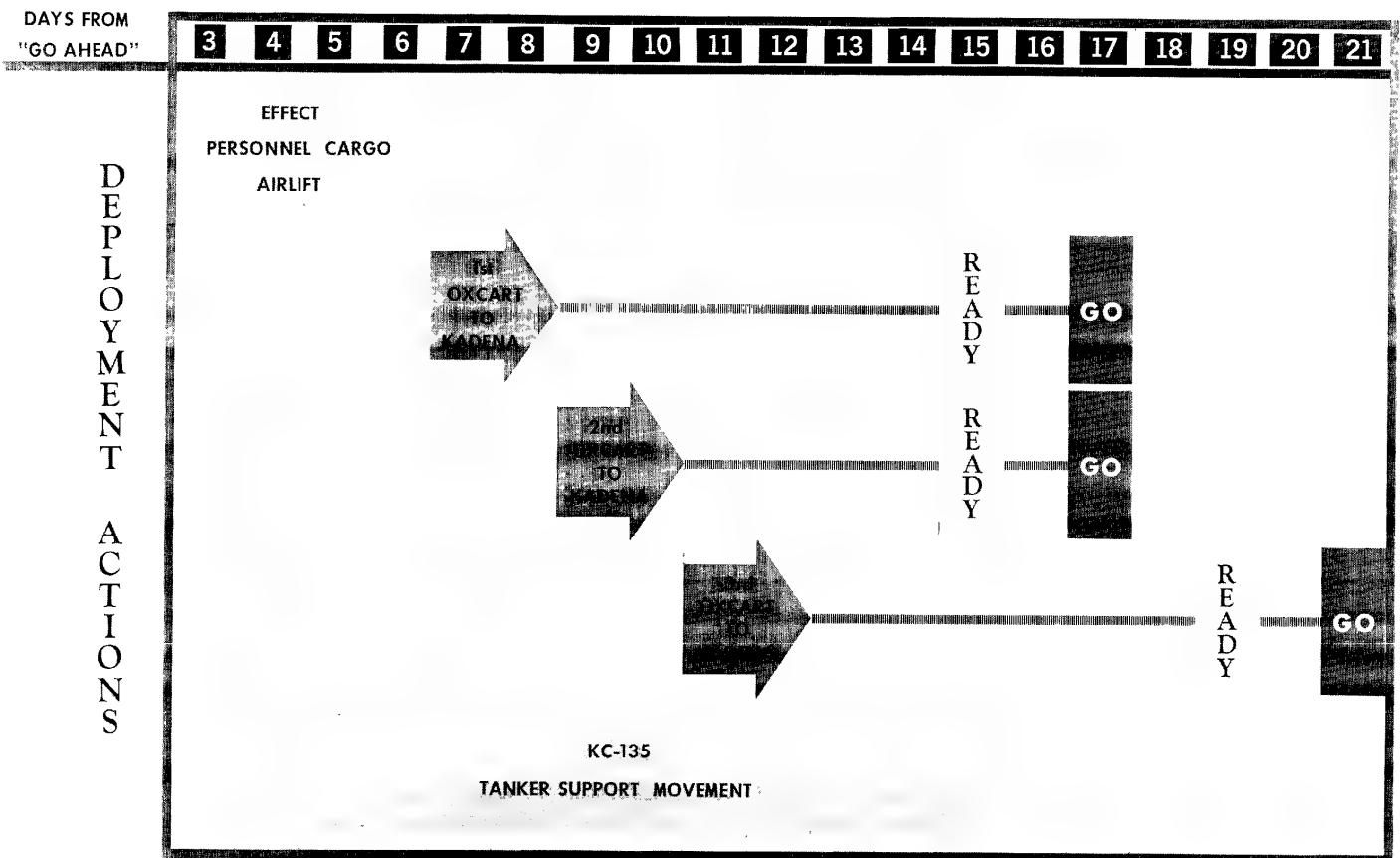
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DEPLOYMENT SCHEDULE

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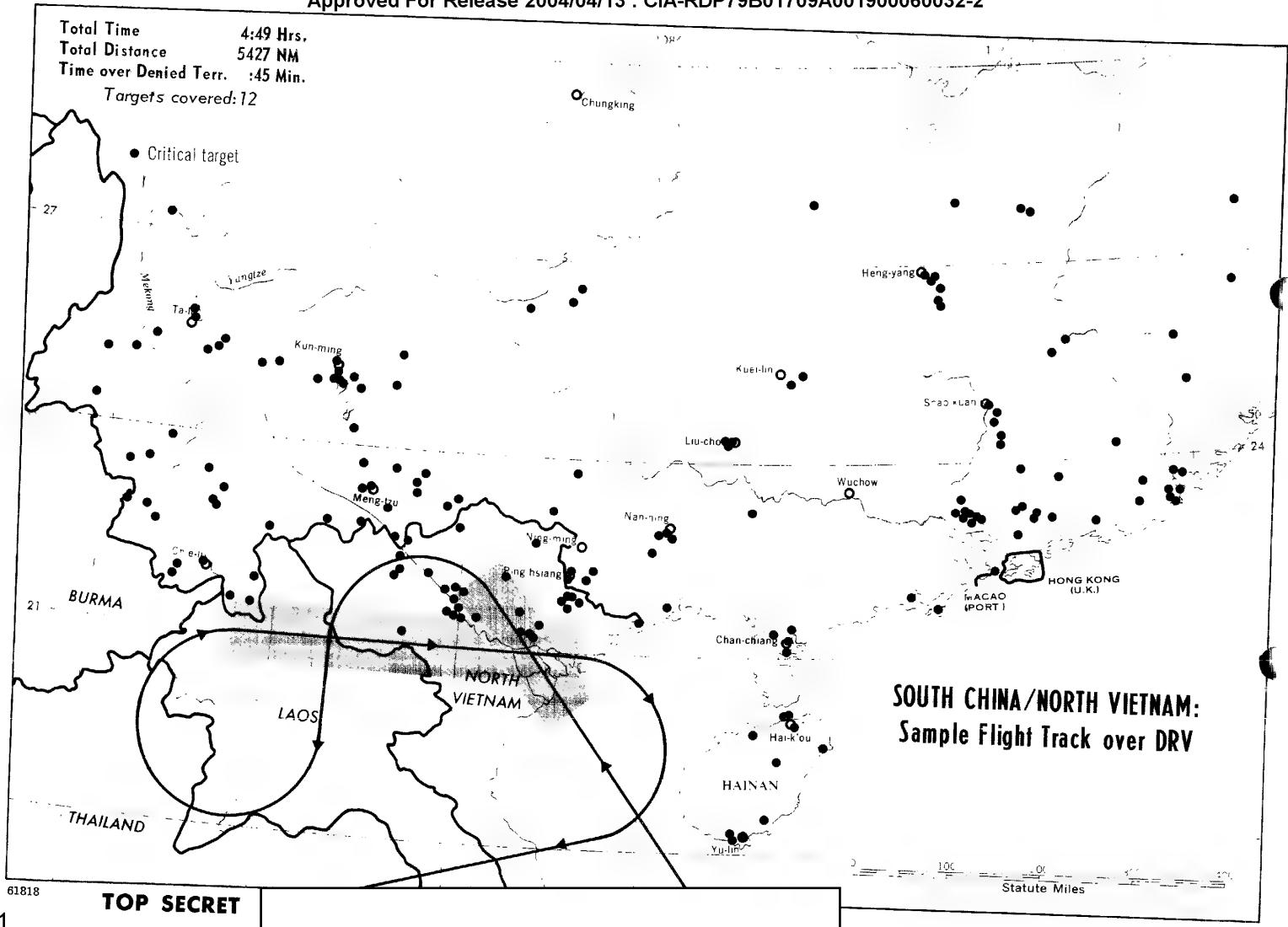
E. This chart shows the time required to begin operations after the authority is given to proceed. We estimate that on authorization to use the OXCART, the aircraft could begin operations over target areas in about 3 weeks.

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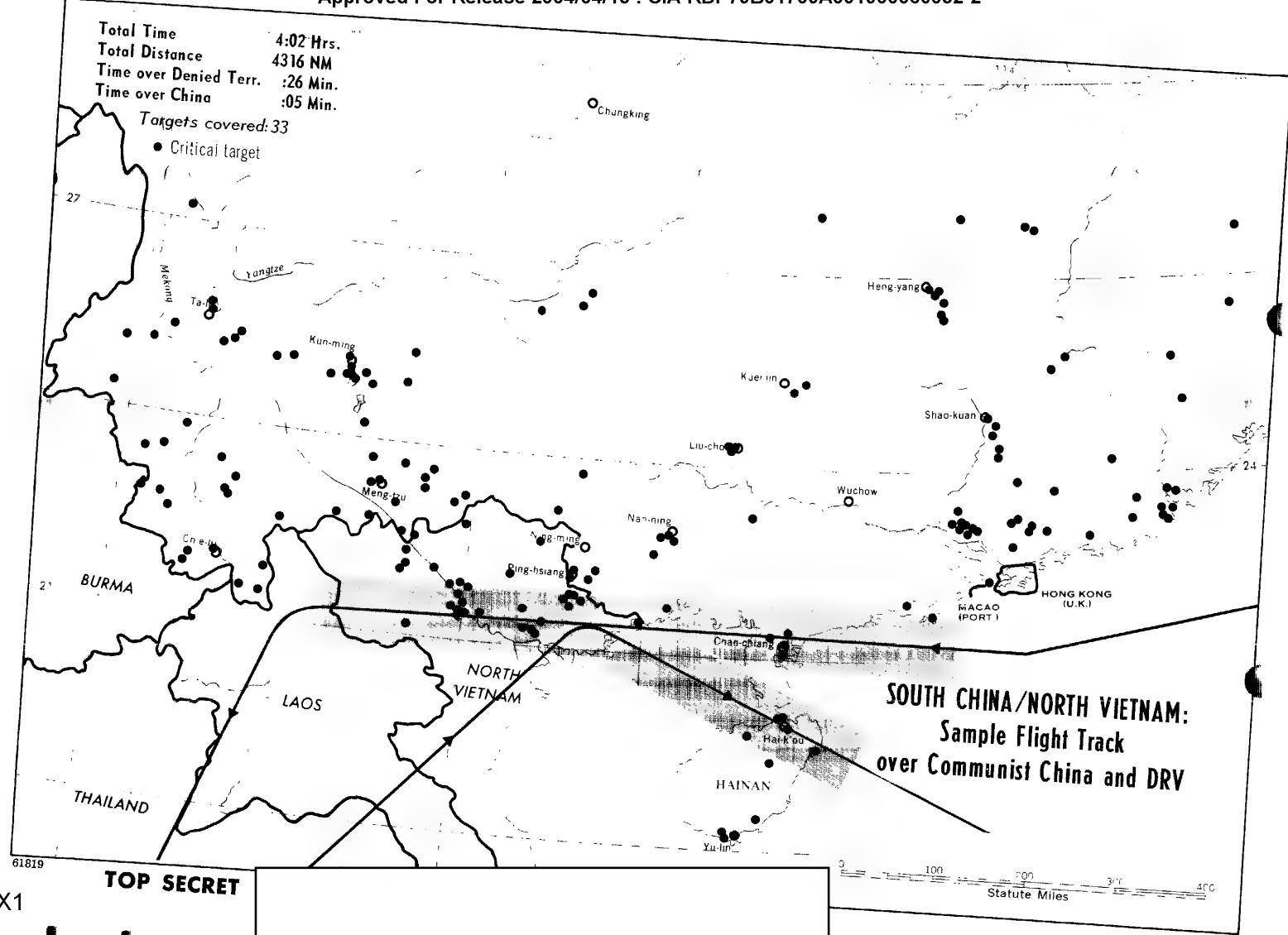
F. Here is a sample flight path for the OXCART, restricted to North Vietnamese territory. This one covers 12 critical targets in 45 minutes over the denied area.

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1. With a minor penetration of South China, a flight track could cover 33 targets in just 26 minutes over North Vietnam and five minutes over South China.

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VIII. The OXCART aircraft is virtually invulnerable to enemy action, and it has the capability to react quickly to meet the few good weather openings—like the “bubble” effect—that we are going to have to depend upon if we are to continue our surveillance of the Chinese from June through September.

A. We believe, therefore, that the use of OXCART affords the best possibility of obtaining early warning on any Chinese Communist intervention in Southeast Asia.

IX. We have considered the probable reactions of other countries to the use of OXCART. The problem has been studied specifically by the United States Intelligence Board, and a Special National Intelligence Estimate has been published on this subject. A copy is available for your perusal.

A. In Summary, the estimate concludes that the Chinese Communists would not take any drastic new military action. They might think at first that the United States was seeking target intelligence to be used at an early date. We feel, however, that the Chinese Communists would soon come to regard this vehicle as merely another vehicle in the continuing United States collection program.

1. The Chinese would probably refrain from revealing the successful over-flight of Chinese territory, as they have done in the case of successful U-2 flights. If an aircraft came down in China, however, there would be a major political and propaganda outcry.

B. We believe that the North Vietnamese also would show no significant reaction to the use of OXCART.

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C. The primary concern of the Soviets would be to forestall the use of the aircraft over Soviet territory. They would probably support any Chinese Communist or North Vietnamese propaganda campaigns, but would certainly not make it the cause of a major crisis in US-Soviet relations.

D. Japanese leftists would probably try to arouse fears of Japanese involvement in North Vietnam or in direct action against China. The Japanese Government could probably deal with the situation, but if an aircraft were brought down and Peking exploited the incident intensively, Tokyo might feel forced to ask the United States to discontinue the program.

F. In other countries around the world, there would be some sharp criticism if an aircraft were lost, but nothing approaching the outcry over the U-2 affair in 1960.

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X. It is my recommendation that, as a first step, OXCART be deployed to Kadena, and that it be employed to acquire photography of North Vietnam.

A. A favorable decision on this recommendation now or in the near future will give us an opportunity to acquire experience in operational use of the aircraft, and to test Chinese Communist reaction to its presence in the theater.

B. If, as now appears likely, the U-2 program will not succeed in acquiring the necessary coverage of the targets within South China, a further recommendation will be submitted concerning the use of OXCART in that area.

C. I believe that the need to proceed with OXCART is clear and demonstrable.

D. Let me simply say in closing: The OXCART is the best reconnaissance system we have. China is a target of the highest priority. To use less than the best now in observing this restless potential enemy would be incautious. To use less than the best would not be commensurate with the existing degree of our national involvement and risk in Vietnam.

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